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I. Introduction

Desert Law is a post-nuclear RTS with the action developing in a new surviving world. People build the civilization a-new; re-invent trying to use the leftovers of what-used-to-be technologies of their predecessors. The fighting units are now civil vehicles, re-built for war purposes, and self-made ones, assembled from everything that could be useful.

The action unfolds from the day when the protagonist, Bred, comes home and finds his settlement ravaged and annihilated…

Bred decides to put an end to the bandits and kill every single one of them. He organizes an affinity group, and they round-about the desert, clearing the ravaged lands from the bandits, accumulating more and more allies under their flag.

But when the name of your flag is vengeance, it becomes more difficult than it may seem, and the circumstances are not that unequivocal…

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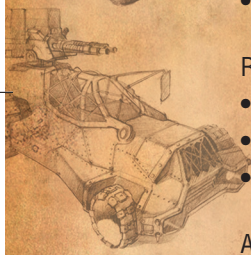

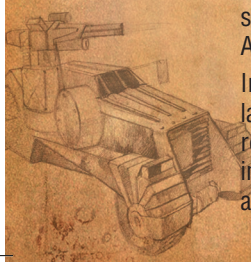

II. Installation and start

System requirements

"Desert Law" is designed for use under Windows 98/ME/2000/XP with DirectX version 8.1 or higher. The game requires 2,150 MB of free disk space. It is recommended to have at least 200 MB additional space for Windows swap file and storing saved game files.

In order to start the game, your system should comply with the following minimal requirements:

- Pentium II 366 MHz
- 64 MB RAM
- Graphic AGP 3D-processor, Riva TNT class with 8 MB of video memory

Recommended configuration:

- Pentium III 1000 MHz
- 128 MB RAM and more
- Graphic AGP 3D-processor AGP 4x GeForce class DDR with 32 MB of video memory.

At least 2,150 MB on your hard drive is required for game installation.

It is recommended to have at least 500 MB of additional space for Windows swap file and storing saved game files.

Installation

Insert Desert Law CD1 (Desert Law install disk) into your CD-ROM drive. If Autorun is enabled, the Desert Law menu will pop up on the screen automatically. If Autorun is disabled on your system, proceed to the game's root directory and launch Autorun.exe.

In the autorun menu, click the "Install game" option. This will launch the installation wizard, which will guide you through the rest of the setup process. Just follow instructions. During the installation, Desert Law files will be copied to your hard disk and corresponding program group and shortcuts will be creat-

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ed in the Start menu. They will allow launching the game, uninstalling it, visiting developer's website, and so on.

Start

To run Desert Law, select shortcut "Start game" from the program group in Start menu.

You may also use corresponding menu in the autorun menu, which is shown when the Desert Law CD1 is put into CD-ROM (Auto insert disk notification must be turned on).

If you chose to place a game shortcut on the Windows Desktop during setup process, you can also launch the game by clicking on it.

Uninstall

In order to uninstall the game, select the "Uninstall (re-install)" shortcut in the game folder of the Start menu.

You can also select 'Uninstall' from the start-up menu, which appears on the screen after the game CD is inserted in your CD-ROM drive (if the Autorun feature is enabled).

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III. Game description

Main menu

After the start you will see the main menu.

New game

To start a game from the very beginning, click on the "New Game" button. After that you will see an introductory comic, being the intro to the game plot. After the comic you will find yourself in the first training mission, where you will master the main principles of the game. As the game evolves, the plot develops, often quite unexpectedly, whereas the game difficulty grows.

Load a Game

To load a saved game and continue it from the place you stopped the last time, click on "Load Game" and choose a file you need.

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Options

If you need the Settings menu, allowing you to change various gameplay, sound and graphics parameters, click on this option.

Credits

Game developer team. The list is displayed until "ESC" is pressed.

Exit

To exit the game click on the "Exit" button.

Comics

The game story is presented in the way of videoclips, done in the manner of comics.

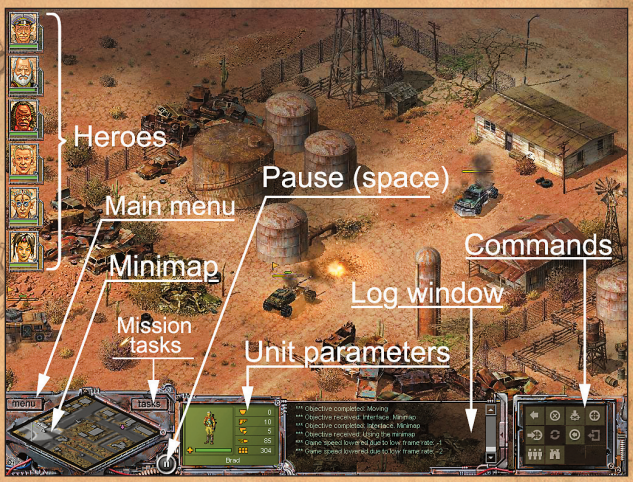
He went to da Barren Lands.
If he thought that he could escape - he'd better think again.
You crazy! Are we gonna go to dese cursed lands?
Quit vibrating! We got the map, we got Kyle, who has already gone through the desert once. So we can go through the Barren Lands too...
...and prepare a warm welcome for that Joker!
Start game

The following functions are available during the comics' play-back:

- Stop and exit to the main menu
- Start game — Start the game (skip the comic and start mission)
- Re-play the comic

Game screen

The game screen:



Character icons

Upper left corner displays icons of all characters, available in this particular mission. By right-clicking on it, you may see all the characteristics of the character. By double-clicking on it, you center the camera on the character in the game.

Minimap

Lower-left corner displays a minimap, which helps you find your path on the battlefield. By left-clicking on the minimap, the camera shifts to the pointed location on the map.

Minimap can also be used for showing the aim to your units. It's enough to right-click on the necessary location on the minimap, instead of moving the camera to the location on the main map.

Minimap designations:

- *Green dots* — player units

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- *Red dots* — enemy units
- *Arrows* — mission areas

Materiel characteristics

In this window you will see the characteristics of the unit, on which the cursor is being pointed.

- *Armor* — the higher it is, the lesser damage your unit receives
- *Damage* — amount of injury, done by a unit with one shot
- *Armor-piercing* — the maximum enemy's armor could be pierced without meaningful penalty.
- *Firing Rate* — firing speed.
- *Amount of bullets* — Unit's ammunition.

This dialogue window shows the conversations of your heroes and other characters. These conversations may contain hints concerning the current situation.
Bonnie
menu
tasks
Brad

Dialog is displayed automatically until any button in the right upper corner is pressed. A dialog can be interrupted at any moment by ⏹, fowarded by ⏩ or rewind by ⏪.

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Log window

Any game information is displayed in a log window, for example, information on character's health level increase, or if the mission was successfully accomplished. In addition to that, this is where the conversation log is kept, so you can always go back to find the necessary fragment.

Controls

You control materiel and characters with the help of a mouse. Mouse buttons are used as follows:

- Left button — character or materiel selection
- Right button — command ordering point

For example, to select a unit and order it to shot at the chosen enemy unit, you have to left-click on it, choose a necessary command (in this particular case, press "R" on the keyboard), and then right-click on the enemy unit you are willing to attack.

Commands

Command panel:

Description of selected number of commands:

- *Move* — move selected vehicles to the given location, disregarding enemy attacks, if any. Hotkey — "Q".
- *Stop* — order all selected units to immediate cease of any actions and stop. Hotkey — "W".
- *Hold Position* — order selected units to stay at the given position. The unit will attack any enemy unit, if it close to unit's firing distance and visibility scope. Hotkey — "E".
- *Attack* — order selected units to attack a given object. Hotkey — "R".

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- *Alert* — order to move to a given location in combat readiness — retaliate any enemy attacks and attack any enemy units within the visibility scope. Hotkey — "A".
- *Turn* — order the selected unit to turn in the given direction. Hotkey — "S".
- *Ambush* — order to "ambush". Being in ambush, when your unit spots an enemy unit, it will wait until the enemy is within the shooting range and only after that it will open fire. Hotkey — "D".
- *Exit* — order the selected characters to leave vehicle or building. Hotkey — "F".
- *Attack ground* (artillery units only) — unit starts attacking a given area, regardless of enemy presence in there. Hotkey — "Z".
- *Shoot-in* (artillery units only) — unit makes several shots at a given location and waits till it sees enemy. In this case hit probability is higher. Hotkey — "X".
- *Mine* (only for units with such ability) — units plant mines at a given location. Hotkey — "C".
- *Repair* (only for units with such ability) — unit repairs a selected friendly unit. Hotkey — "C".
- *Replenish ammo* (only for units with such ability) — unit replenishes ammo of a selected friendly unit. Hotkey — "X".
- *Binoculars* (only for units with such ability) — increases unit's view range. In this case the unit should stand still. Hotkey — "X".
- *Regroup* (for characters only) — allows to choose one of the available types of characters movement. Hotkey — "Z".

Additional commands "Regroup"

- *Auto* — a character selects an optimal mode automatically. Hotkey — "Q".
- *Aggressive* (unavailable for artillery and non-combat units) — a character will move and attack the closest spotted enemy unit. Hotkey — "W".
- *Defense* (unavailable for artillery and non-combat units) — a character will crawl. Hotkey — "E".
- *"On March"* — a character will move faster, paying no regard to enemy. Hotkey — "R".
- *"Hidden"* (for characters only) — a character will crawl. In this mode, the character will be almost invisible for the enemy. Hotkey — "A".

Seizure of Materiel

A special feature of the game is a possibility for characters to change vehicles, incl. former enemy ones. You can decipher what character drives what vehicle by color flags atop of them:

Settings

Player Profile

In the Player Profile menu, you can change your name and mouse sensitivity, and also set difficulty level (easy, normal, hard). Difficulty level "Easy" is designed for players without extensive knowledge of RTS and will not require any special abilities, allowing for simple enjoyable gameplay.

"Normal" and "Hard" levels are recommended for ones, who are experienced in RTS or those who have successfully accomplished the "Easy" Level.

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Sound Settings

In the "Sound" menu, you will be able to adjust volume for music and sound FX (unit replies, explosions, shots, ambient sound and so on).

Graphics settings

You can change parameters related to in-game graphics in the "Graphics" menu. You can change resolution and color depth, adjust contrast, gamma, special effects quality and also change violence level (turn blood off and on).

Certain parameters of the "Graphics" menu may affect the performance of the game. These parameters include texture quality (high, low, compressed), and Video Graphics optimization (can either be turned off and on, we recommend to turn it on when playing on ATI Radeon videocards), cursor (in-game/system, in-game cursor type recommended for faster machines).

In case if your computer is unable to process data with certain speed and FPS counter goes below certain threshold, the game speed will be automatically reduced. This threshold is set with parameter "FPS limit". If it is set to 0, the game speed won't be reduced in any circumstances (you can adjust it with "+/-" buttons).

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IV. Characters, Materiel And Gameworld

History of the world

The game unfolds in the southern part of the USA, rich of oil, 25 years after a nuclear conflict. The latter was a follow-up to a long power crisis, revolts and ecological crisis. That is why the nuclear war did not put an end to the humanity, but it was enough for annihilation of the world's economical system. Pursuant to globalization the system was 'growing' rice in one part of the world, and 'assembling' computers in the other. Many people survived in the parts of the world with rice cultivation, whereas the parts with dominant computer assembly business were, firstly, bombed more than the rest, and secondly, there was great lack of food there. Almost 99 per cent of population did not survive starvation, X-ray sickness and other miseries. The ones who had more luck are cutting each other's throats for material benefits. Parents of Brad, born one-year-before-the-war Texas lad, were the ones who did not escape being killed. The boy managed to hide in the basement of the parent's farm before the raid and, therefore, survived.

At the same time, the only circumstances that the neighboring Cuba had to withstand were cease of export of cigars and sugar, slight weather cool-down, total massacre, dissolution of a state and the follow-up famine with almost 40 per cent of population dead. After 20 years of the post-war period, Cuba's population was almost restored and started its expansion northwards. The leader of the expansion became Colonel Murjeha, who organized an expedition to American oil derricks in the Mexican Gulf eight years after the war. (Hanging the surviving miners off the edges of the rigs) Having hanged the rest of the oilmen, who had been eating raw fish for quite some time, Murjeha established the only transport network in the Caribbean and became its sole proprietor. 12 years later, when the oil supplies came to an end (Murjeha and his gang still had no clue about boring new oil-wells and extracting oil), he shifted his activities to sparsely populated South of USA, seizing one oil-well after another.

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Materiel

There are 47 different units, nominally split into six classes.

- *"Scout"* — most proficient in the vehicles that are available these days. They are weakly armored, weakly equipped and can only survive because of their speed characteristics. Mostly used for surveillance and sabotage.
- *"Shooter"* — generally slow and weakly armored vehicle, but very well armed. Usually it has a long-range cannon with great damage. If this materiel is well-protected from enemy assaults, it will serve you well.
- *"Shooter-miner"* — shooter, who is also capable of mining.
- *"Elephant"* — a perfectly armored vehicle. It just cannot be demolished! But there are some disadvantages: it is generally slow and usually quite weakly armed. One should use it to distract the enemy attention. Elephant should be the closest vehicle to the enemy positions!
- *"Fighter"* — an average of the three aforementioned vehicles. Well-armored, good speed, well armed. Being quite universal, it is still outmatched by the respective specialized units by each individual parameter.
- *"Troubleshooter"* — a unit that cannot shoot, but is capable of repairing the others.

Characters

Apart from the vehicles, there are heroes and other characters in the game. All materiel in the game is initially neutral, and only after seizure by the player's character or enemy's character, it becomes, correspondingly, player-controlled or vice versa — enemy-driven.

Heroes accumulate experience in action, and raise their levels, resulting in better mastering materiel. Some start driving better, others — shooting better, and thus, you need to get the corresponding materiel for them. You can find out specific character characteristics by right-clicking on its icon.

There are seven hero-characters in total available in the game.

Bred

Name: Bred
Nick: Coyote
Age: 23
Favorite gun: Shotgun

Main character. Leader of the Coyotes.

Well-built, but prefers to stand out by his intellect. Charismatic, straight-forward and a bit crusty. Distinctive habit — smiles with one side of the mouth. Knows how to read.

Damage is the main skill that increases with the new level.

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Jane

Name: Jane
Nick: N/A
Age: 22
Favorite gun: Colt Commando

Bred's girl-friend. Not married.

Independent, restrained. Hides her emotions. A woman of few words. Wears tops, shirts tied on the belly, denim skirts, army boots. Bust size — 2.

Range of vision is the main skill that increases with the new level.

Bonnie

Name: N/A
Nick: Bonnie
Age: 21
Favorite gun: Heavy machine-gun

Bar beauty. Not married.

Member of the Coyotes.

Daughter of a sinful love of a Chinese woman and a Mexican (does not remember any of them). Infamous for her humungous breast size and friendship with Kyle. Always out there for new sensations, thus participating in all risky actions of the gang. Knows how to read.

Not a stupid type of a girl and not expansive either.

Rate of fire is the main skill that increases with the new level.

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Kyle

Name: Kyle
Nick: N/A
Age: 52
Favorite gun: Ingram

Owner of the bar.

Member of the Coyotes.

Talkative, experienced, kind. Left hand had to be cut off completely after an accident. Used to be respected as a fighter and mega-driver. Lives with Bonnie when Bonnie does not live with someone else. Knows how to read.

Firing range is the main skill that increases with the new level.

Matthew

Name: Matthew
Nick: Poet
Age: 26
Favorite gun: Minigun

Lieutenant of the Coyotes.

Main responsibility — kick the junior gang brothers and sisters with disciplinary purposes.

Rigid type. Would chew bathroom glasses and rip out tires if the bet is good.

Has a habit of ending up his interlocutor's phrase with quite unexpected rhymes like: "What the hell?" — "Shut up, pal!"

Damage is the main skill that increases with the new level.

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Mikhos

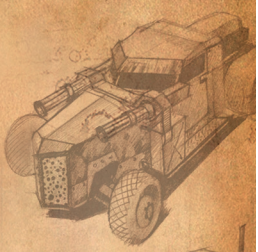
Name: Mikhos
Nick: Geek
Age: N/A
Favorite gun: Wrench

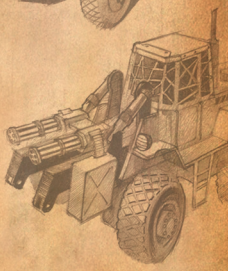
Brilliant mechanic.

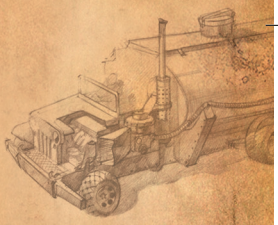
Lieutenant of the Coyotes.

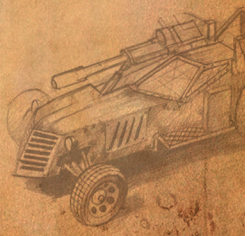
Inquisitive, talkative, nosy, psycho. Repairs and builds everything gas-driven 24/7. Knows how to read.

Agility is the main skill that increases with the new level.









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V. Recommendations

Desert Law looks and plays like any other conventional RTS, but if you take a closer look at the game's mechanics, you may notice that there is plenty of useful tricks. If used properly they will improve your results during the play and help you raise your commanding skills. In this section, we are going to give you some general advice on commanding your troops and in-game tactics.

Use the Pause function

No matter how banal this tip may look, using pause (Spacebar) is really important in Desert Law. The game mechanics are built in such a way that pause gives lots of advantage to the player. Without pausing the game, you may find it difficult to issue orders to all of your units in real-time.

Use shooting range radius

In Desert Law, every unit has its own shooting range radius (press Alt + R to check it), which has a great effect on its combat effectiveness.

Secure your heroes

When one of the heroes dies, the mission is lost. Move heroes from broken to less damaged vehicles.

Don't lose control over the battle

Proper control over combat on the entire game map is essential for victory in Desert Law. Make use of quick access buttons (Ctrl + 1-9) and pause the game often to take a thorough look at the current combat situation and its development.

Repair broken vehicles

You can drive broken vehicles out of the battle and repair them with the help of a mechanic. And then send the repaired vehicles back to the battle.

Use stealth-mode for heroes

A hero in stealth mode is almost invisible for the enemy. Use this feature to seize neutral vehicles on the enemy territory.

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Readiness for action

Units may be put on "alert mode" (A) and engage in combat on enemy's sight. Use this movement mode instead of the usual one, and then your units will immediately attack enemy units if they spot them.

Ambush

Your units are also able to set up an ambush (D), wait for the enemy to come closer and open fire.

Hold position

Sometimes you will receive orders to capture a position and hold it. To do that, make sure your units are in the right spot and press "Hold position" button (E). They will stand ground and fight to the bitter end.

Turning a unit

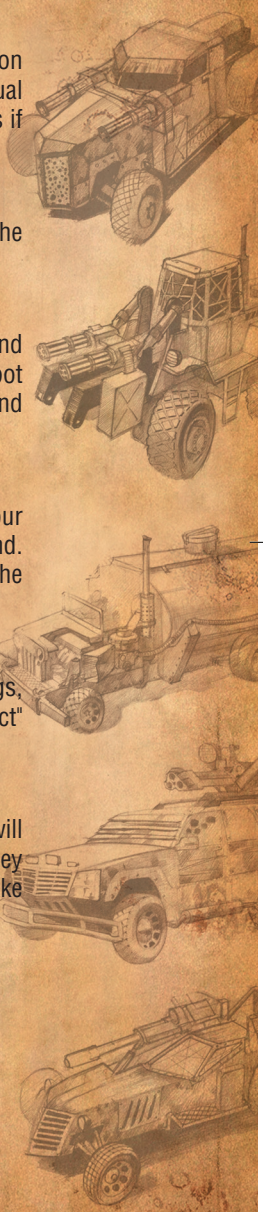
If you know the enemy approaching routes for sure, turn your materiel in that direction with the help of "Turn" (S) command. Your units will immediately open fire, as soon as they spot the enemy, instead of losing time for turning.

Attacking any object

During the game, you may need to attack neutral buildings, constructions and objects. To do that, use "attack any object" function (R).

Focusing fire

Give your units one aim for attack at a point of time. This will allow you to destroy the enemy's materiel faster than they could demolish yours. Damaged enemy materiel shoots like new, whereas destroyed does not shoot at all.



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VI. Credits

ARISE

Game design:
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Peter Mukin
Pavel Ananiev

Script:
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Pavel Ananiev

Programming:
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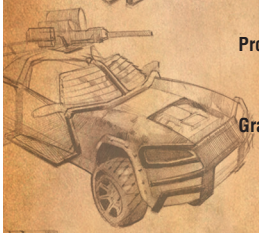

Sound:
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Strategic Music Company, Dmitry Kuzmenko.
See www.strategicmusic.org for more details

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Special thanks:
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Marketing & PR: Nikolai Baryshnikov, Svetlana Gorobets, Anatoliy Subbotin, Alexey Artemenko

Pagination: Sergei Konovalov, Tatyana Katova

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Digital Light Studio together with TriDigital Studio

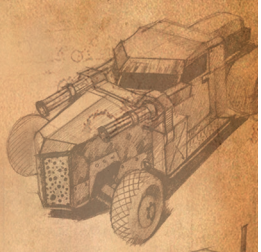
Development of the introduction video

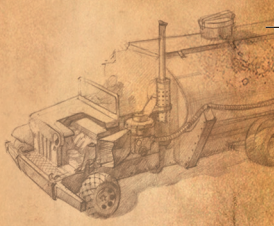
Management: Sergei Gashnikov

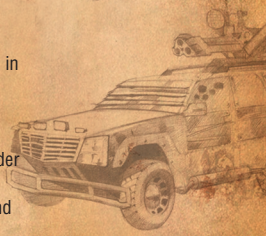
Drawing of backgrounds and textures: Vitaliy Shitnev

Development of 3D models and animation: Eugeniy Dunskiy, Alexander Alexandrov, Sergei Gashnikov

Composing: Andrey Ledenev, Andrey Tolkachev







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Lua © 1994-2006 Tecgraf, PUC-Rio. All rights reserved. Lua scenarios language developed and created by Waldemar Celes, Roberto Ierusalimschy č Luiz Henrique de Figueiredo.
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